

STEM CELL RESEARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be here this evening as the designee of the majority leader talking about something that is hugely, hugely important that we debated on the floor of this House just an hour, maybe a couple of hours ago. And, Mr. Speaker, I am referring, of course, to the issue of stem cell research.

And just to kind of set the record straight, Mr. Speaker, I think my colleagues know that my prior profession was that of a physician, in particular as an OB-GYN doctor, a pro-life OB-GYN practicing in my home State of Georgia for 26 years.

And the President, before I was elected to the Congress in August of 2001, Mr. Speaker, made a very careful, thought-out and prayerful decision in regard to the issue of the utilization of embryonic stem cells for medical research in hopes of providing someday a cure for some of the devastating diseases that we have seen in public service announcements on television. And God rest his soul, I remember when the actor Christopher Reeve was talking about the suffering and his malady. And, of course, there are other conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's and Type 1 diabetes and things like that. And we do hope and every Member in this body hopes on both sides of the aisle, and the other body as well, that someday we can have our medical research scientists, doctors, develop an ability to treat some of these chronic, devastating diseases. Spinal cord injury certainly is another.

But the President made this decision because people were asking that we take so-called extra embryos from fertility clinics that couples were not going to use. Maybe they had already achieved a pregnancy or several pregnancies and they had completed their family, and yet because of egg retrieval and in vitro fertilization, there were these embryos that they owned, that belonged to them, that were frozen in case they may, indeed, need them at some point in the future. Some couples, of course, would decide that their family was complete and maybe never utilize these frozen embryos. And there was a great push on the President to say, well, look, these are just extra. They are going to be thrown away anyway. The couples have already said they do not want them and they are willing to donate them to research.

And the research we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, is the ability to take those embryos and obtain from them something that we refer to as a stem cell and, by definition, an embryonic stem cell. But to do that, as the President so clearly understood, these embryos were being destroyed. Although it is not an exactly accurate de-

scription, Mr. Speaker, but you may say you just put these embryos in a blender and you churn them up and you centrifuge and at some point you are able to obtain these stem cells from the embryo that have a potential in cell culture, when stimulated in a certain way, to grow into really any tissue of the body.

□ 2100

There are three different germ cell layers. But in essence, if you needed cardiac muscle in somebody who, let's say had a heart attack, and you could go these embryonic stem cells and make them become heart muscle, maybe you could repair that scar on a person's heart. Or if you could stimulate these cells to become nerve tissue, maybe indeed you could help a little child overcome the paralysis of spina bifida, or someone with a spinal cord injury like a very fine Member of this House that suffered a spinal cord injury as a teenager, maybe you can do that.

The President recognized that. But basically what he said to the American people in August of 2001, shortly before 9/11, is we are not going to allow taxpayer dollars to be used for research on embryonic stem cells if it results in the destruction of human life, the destruction of one life, maybe a near perfect life if you allow it to continue to live, in the hopes that you can, in destroying it, take these beginning cells that we call stem cells from the embryo and help somebody else.

Well, the President basically said, Mr. Speaker, and I agreed with him then and I agree with him wholeheartedly today as a pro-life physician and a pro-life Member of this body, there was too much collateral damage. In this instance the collateral damage was the death of that embryo, that little baby, if you will. We call them fetuses, embryo, fetus, but really it is just a little baby.

Today at a press conference, and they have been on the Hill before, but it was so poignant to me, Mr. Speaker, to see some of these so-called snowflake babies, these little embryos from these fertility clinics, these so-called extras.

Well, lo and behold, almost 100 couples were aware of the availability and asked some of these parents who owned those embryos, they were their children and they had the right to throw them away or donate them, offer them up for adoption, and some infertile couples, many of whom we saw today, Mr. Speaker, at this press conference, legally adopted these so-called throw-away, extra, nobody-wants-them embryos.

In two instances, they resulted in twins, identical twins. I saw 3-year-old boys, beautiful boys and 2-year-old identical twin girls, two different couples of these almost 100 moms and dads who have adopted these so-called throwaway embryos.

Mr. Speaker, those two sets of twins that me and some of my colleagues on

both sides of the aisle saw today at this press conference, they could have been in that blender churned up so that their stem cells would have been obtained in hopes of helping somebody else. These precious lives would not exist today.

This President has got a great heart and great compassion and great morality, and he was absolutely right to say we will fund with taxpayer dollars through our National Institutes of Health and our great scientists, we will fund research programs on stem cells, even embryonic stem cells, but not if it means we have got to kill some little baby in harvesting these cells.

Well, the President was right. But last year in this body a couple of our Members sponsored a bill, one from both sides of the aisle, two well-respected Members, I have great respect for both of them, and Members in the other body wanted to bring this back up and felt that because the American public, after watching all of these public service announcements that tug at your heartstrings, felt that, well, you know, why not? You are just going to throw away those embryos.

Of course, these public service announcements didn't talk about the snowflake babies, the children that we saw today. If they had known that, if the public knew that, if they were fully aware of it, then all these polling numbers that we hear, Mr. Speaker, that say, oh, the public wants this, the public demands this, and therefore we have this bill last year, the so-called Castle-DeGette bill, H.R. 810, I believe is the number, and it passes this body. It passes this body with support on both sides of the aisle, but with more Democrats supporting it than Republicans. But, in any regard, it passes.

Now, today the bill passes the Senate. I think they thought they were going to roll the table over there, Mr. Speaker. It barely got the number of votes that it needed, 63, where they require that supermajority in the other body.

So this bill is going to go to the President. It is going to go to the President. It is probably already on his desk, or maybe it will be there tomorrow, and he is going to be expected to vote yea or nay on that bill.

Well, not only do I hope and pray, I have every confidence that this President will stand by his convictions, as he always has, Mr. Speaker, whether we are talking about fighting the Global War on Terrorism or protecting the sanctity of human life, and this President will veto that bill, as well he should.

Now, one of the main purposes of me wanting to speak tonight about values, and there is hardly anything more important in this body that we attend to than the values of this great Nation that we are so privileged to be a part of, we have another bill. We have a bill that was voted on in this body today, and it required by the rules of procedure a two-thirds vote here, and it did

not quite get it today. It did not quite reach that two-thirds majority for passage. But I want to just kind of talk about the bill a little bit and make sure my colleagues fully understand.

I hope there was no confusion about this alternate bill, because really what the bill does, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, it is an opportunity to obtain these same embryonic stem cells without destroying or even harming human life. I as a physician know that it can be done. In fact, it is occurring in nature. I will describe that in just a minute.

My colleague who really drafted the original bill, ROSCOE BARTLETT, the gentleman from Maryland, this became the Senator Santorum bill, which was a companion bill. I commend the Senator from Pennsylvania, a great pro-life, traditional, family value member in the Senate, for introducing it.

Mr. Speaker, that bill in the Senate today, it didn't pass with 63 votes like the H.R. 810 Castle-DeGette bill did. The vote was 100-0. I don't even know how many days you are going to have 100 members. That is 100 percent of that body present. It is hard at any time to have 100 percent of the membership present, what with family emergencies and things like that.

But today there were 100, the whole body was there, and a 100-0 vote in support of Senator SANTORUM, Representative BARTLETT's bill, that would fund research, would let taxpayer dollars go to grants to research ways of obtaining those embryonic and other stem cells without harming or destroying human life.

Now, it passed. That bill passed here in the House of Representatives this afternoon, but it was just a little bit short of the two-thirds that it needed. We will bring that bill back to this floor, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, and it will pass, and it will pass with bipartisan support, and it will pass with a wide majority. A great plurality of the 435 Members of this body will support this bill. Two-thirds? No, but darn close to it.

It will go to the President and the President will have an opportunity then to say to the American people, you know, I have got these two pieces of legislation here. They both seek the same result. Each bill wants to give us an opportunity to put money behind research so that we can obtain these embryonic and adult stem cells so we can help people like the late great Christopher Reeve and Michael J. Fox, a person who we all know who is suffering from parkinsonism, but, more importantly, the folks back home, our constituents, our families, our moms, our dads, our grandparents, the child I see in church every Sunday who is suffering from a spinal condition, probably spina bifida.

We know that we can put money behind research in either one of these two bills, the Castle-DeGette bill, H.R. 810, I think it is, or the Santorum-Bartlett bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, the difference, there is a huge difference in the two bills. As I told my colleagues on the floor today, the difference is in the collateral damage. In the Bartlett-Santorum bill, it allows this research to be able to obtain stem cells maybe from an embryo by a biopsy without harming the fetus, or the Castle-DeGette bill, where you do it the easy way. You just kind of take the embryo and you churn it up and centrifuge off the stem cells.

I heard someone on the floor today say that, well, you know, we know that method, the blender method, if you will, where we destroy human life in obtaining the embryonic stem cells. It is easy. It is proven. We can do it. There is no problem. Why should we go through another step or two and go to the trouble and the expense? And, oh, by the way, it may take a year or two before we know for sure that it works. Why don't we just go ahead and do the expedient thing?

Goodness gracious, my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, the expedient thing results in the loss of life, and no snowflake embryos, no precious twins that we saw today. It is just not the right thing to do.

This President, thank God, has a good heart and a good soul and a good mind, and he knows that. And I think God has given him the wisdom to make the right decision in this case and resist the pressure and understand that the polling, many times when you ask the question, if people don't fully understand what I am trying to explain to my colleagues tonight, and anyone that might be listening at home, that when you look at it and understand what I am saying, and it is the absolute truth, what I am saying, I think the American people overwhelmingly would say, well, gee, you know, if we are going to get the same result and there is already good research going on with Federal funding, our tax dollars supporting research on adult stem cells and we are getting good results, all right.

In the private sector, Mr. Speaker, there is plenty of research going on in regard to embryonic stem cells, some of which are obtained from those fertility clinics with the destruction of human life. If private people want to do that, the State of California recently enacted legislation or had a statewide referendum that called for \$3 billion in funding for embryonic stem cell research that does result in the death of the embryo, and that is fine. If they want to do that in California with their money, fine. If private companies want to do it, that is fine.

But to say to the American people, who I am sure I am correct in saying that more than 50 percent of them, certainly in my district in my State, in my hospital, are strongly pro-life, and to say to them, you know, we are going to take your money, your tax dollars, and we are going to put it and let NIH researchers or give grants to doctors,

wherever, you know, I am not going to name names or places, but these higher institutes of learning, these ivory towers, they are great, we love them.

□ 2115

We are all for research. But not if it means that my money is going to fund something that results in yet another of the 40 million abortions that have occurred since Roe versus Wade in 1973.

Make no mistake about it. Every time you kill one of these embryos to obtain those stem cells in this manner, that is yet another abortion. So I am very much opposed to the Castle-DeGette bill and very much in favor, Mr. Speaker, of the Santorum-Bartlett bill.

As I say, I will in all probability have an opportunity to discuss the rule on the floor tomorrow. We will have another vote, and I will be very proud when my colleagues again on both sides of the aisle, there is no way this should be a partisan issue, really it is not. We will have the votes to do the right thing. I really look forward to that.

I wanted, Mr. Speaker, to take a little time to talk about another issue or two, that may come up as we refer this week to "values week" in the House of Representatives. Although we sometimes get criticized and people say, well, you know, you all are spending all of your time talking about values, and yet we have got a deficit and we have got a national debt and we need to fund this and we need to fund that, and, you know, your responsibilities, you are neglecting them as you concentrate on these value issues like the Marriage Protection Act, the Pledge of Allegiance Protection Act and this stem cell issue, I would say to those critics, and some of them were sitting in this Chamber earlier today, from my perspective, I was sent here to do more than just spend people's money.

Obviously we have to spend money, and we try to do it wisely. But the values of this country are just as important to me in my representation of those values, not just my district in Georgia, the 11th, or my State, but of this entire country, because we need to show the world that we are a country of strong moral values.

I think that that in itself will help us as much as anything in the Middle East, to let the rest of the world know that we have character in this country and we stand by these values. And so for us to spend time standing up for the sanctity of marriage is an example. I would say to my constituents and my colleagues, that is no waste of time. That is no waste of time at all.

The debate that we had on the floor today on this constitutional amendment resolution brought to us by the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE), a champion really of this cause, and I commend her for her ethics both in this 109th Congress and the 108th Congress.

We fell a little short of the two-thirds vote we needed. They fell a little

short in the other body. But I will guarantee you the American people would not fall short on this issue. 88 percent of them in 45 States have already addressed this issue, and they cannot wait for this Congress with its two-thirds majority vote in both bodies to give them the opportunity to vote on this constitutional amendment, defining, defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

I just went over, Mr. Speaker, before we started the time and looked at the dictionary. It is right to my left as we come into the door, these hallowed halls. And you see Members looking at it all the time. This happens to be the Random House Webster's dictionary.

And listen to what they say about the definition of marriage. "The social institution under which a man and a woman establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitments and religious ceremony".

That is what we are talking about. And when Members stand up and criticize and say, oh, well, what about Federalism and the power of the States? Well, the States regulate issues such as age of consent and consanguinity and the rules of civil procedure and inheritance, and that does not change at all.

But it just says that these activist judges, because of a constitutional amendment that I know one day soon we will pass, that the definition, the definition of marriage is that union between a man and a woman.

You know who benefits the most from that, Mr. Speaker? You know who benefits the most, my colleagues? It is the children of that marriage. And do not call me a bigot for my strong feeling that a child needs a mother and father. I feel very strongly about that. And this is not a racial issue. There is no hatred involved, certainly not in the heart of MARILYN MUSGRAVE, a great mom and wife.

The Members who really overwhelming support this. This is the right thing to do. And that is why we spend time in this body, precious time, yes, talking about our values. Our values in regard to the sanctity of life and the sanctity of marriage.

Finally, finally, Mr. Speaker, let me talk a little bit about the pledge of allegiance. You know, I believe it is the 9th District Court, we sometimes refer to it as the Left Coast, but that would be California for those of you who do not know to what I am referring.

For those judges to say that it is unconstitutional to have "under God" in the pledge of allegiance and make a decision, Federal District Court in the 9th District which includes California and the rest of the left coast, and to have that say that that is applicable to the entire United States.

No way. No way. And we are not going to have it. We are not going to have it. And we will be discussing and voting on a bill tomorrow that says to these activist judges, you keep your legal opinions away from our pledge of allegiance. And you have no authority whatsoever to speak in regard to that.

If some State court wants to do it, or some State supreme court wants to do it, and their citizens are happy with that, so be it. But not at the Federal level. I am going to tell you, if they did it in the State of Georgia we would throw the bums out. They may embrace them in California, but that is what makes this country great, you know. I mean, different strokes for different folks.

But we want to make absolutely sure that these activist Federal judges are not taking God out of our pledge of allegiance, and we will have that vote, we will have the discussion. We will have a good discussion and then we will have Members kind of go on record. Those votes will not be by voice vote, I can assure you of that, Mr. Speaker. They will be record votes, and I really, really look forward to that debate.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude. I think we have a very important Rules Committee meeting coming up in a few minutes and I need to be at that nothing.

But again, I wanted to thank the leadership. I want to thank my Speaker and my majority leader, our conference chairwoman, DEBORAH PRYCE for giving me the opportunity to come here tonight and spend 30 or 40 minutes talking about values and how important they are on our side of the aisle, and how important they are to the leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I think that they are important really to all Members in this chamber. They are good people, good hearts, men and women on both sides of the aisle. And I think sometimes, though, we have a tendency to lose our way. We have got a lot of pressure, a lot of interest groups, a lot of advocates, stakeholders wanting us to do certain things.

But I think if we stop and think, we do not get in too big a hurry, realize that we do not have to rush to destroy embryos, as an example. If we take our time, we can get the same result with no collateral damage. That is what it is all about. That is what values are all about.

So I am happy to have had this time to share my thoughts with my colleagues. I look forward to tomorrow, another day, when we will have some very, very significant value votes in this body. With that, I yield back.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCMORRIS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2154

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. SESSIONS) at 9 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 2754, ALTERNATIVE PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL THERAPIES ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-578) on the resolution (H. Res. 924) providing for consideration of the Senate bill (S. 2754) to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. KIND (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today before 3:00 p.m. on account of illness.

Ms. MCKINNEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. MCCARTHY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKELTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HERSETH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BERRY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OWENS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. JINDAL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, July 24 and 25.

Mr. SHAYS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GILCHREST, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 42. An act to ensure that the right of an individual to display the flag of the